

A Pathway to Legal Profession

with

The Legal Profession Admission Board
and The University of Sydney's
Law Extension Committee



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY



JUSTICE

More comprehensive information is available
on our websites:

www.lpab.justice.nsw.gov.au

www.lec.sydney.edu.au

Objectives of the Program

The fundamental aim of the course is to provide a readily accessible legal education and a equitable means of entry to the legal profession.

The program is academically rigorous, but emphasis is placed on performance in the course rather than on restrictive entry requirements.



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Contents

Becoming a Lawyer	2
Our Students	3
Our Graduates	5
The LEC Offers:	5
Suitability	7
The Diploma in Law Study Program & Examinations	8
The Curriculum	10
The LEC Lecture Program	11
Registration & Enrolment	12
Progression and Assessment	14
Some Frequently Asked Questions	15
Further Enquiries	20

Becoming a Lawyer

From the time of the Inns of Court in England, education for the legal profession has been closely associated with the Courts. NSW is no different, and from 1848 – before Australian universities offered law degrees – the NSW Supreme Court set examinations for admission to the profession. This tradition has been continued by the Legal Profession Admission Board (LPAB), the authority that administers the admission of lawyers on behalf of the Supreme Court of NSW. Successful completion of the LPAB examinations leads to the award of the LPAB Diploma in Law. For the purposes of admission as a lawyer, the Diploma and a degree from an accredited University Law School are equivalent qualifications.

The Law Extension Committee of the University of Sydney (LEC) was established in 1964 to assist students in their preparation for the LPAB examinations. The LEC offers a teaching program based on evening lectures and weekend schools. The teaching program is designed with the expectation that students will have other daytime commitments and/or live outside metropolitan Sydney (distance students), so all classes are after hours. The Weekend Schools provide important opportunities for interaction with lecturers and other students, and all students, wherever they live, are expected to attend.

This program is designed to be affordable, accessible and equitable. The reasonable fees and broad entry requirements enable students to become legal practitioners in circumstances where it might not have been possible otherwise.

The LEC seeks to provide a program that:

- is relatively inexpensive;
- is designed for students;
- values diversity of background among students;
- is designed students who have other daytime commitments and/or live outside metropolitan Sydney;
- combines academic rigour with flexibility of entry.

This brochure provides a brief outline of the objectives, structure and administration of the course. If you have further enquiries, you are welcome to contact either the [LPAB](#) or the [LEC](#). You will find their contact details on the back of this brochure.

Our Students

The student cohort is broad and diverse and reflects the philosophy underlying the course, that of making the study of the law available to all who have the aptitude to undertake it. Ages range from school leavers to mature age to seniors and the total cohort numbers around 1200. Many students have English as a second language. Some have completed extensive post-school study – others have not studied in a long time. Overseas trained lawyers often undertake the course in order to qualify to practise in an Australian jurisdiction. Everyone can find a peer group in the course.

Entry to the course is designed to be accessible – see the Enrolment section for further details of eligibility. The entry requirements recognise the importance of prior learning, life and work experience. However, relaxed entry requirements does not mean low academic standards. The academic standards are rigorous, and as a result, completion of the course is highly respected in the legal profession.



This is what our students say about the course:

“This is a great course. Thank you for the opportunity to study law.”

“... A great opportunity at a very affordable price.”

“I have found the course challenging, in a good way!”

“I am thoroughly enjoying it, thank you. All lecturers involved so far have made it very clear what is expected and given us everything we need to succeed.”

“I appreciate being able to study this way as its flexibility in delivery enables me to fit with other things in my life.”

“The diversity of lecturing styles and breadth of experience to draw from is an asset of the course.”

“Thank you very much for providing such an affordable possibility to get access to the legal profession!”



Our Graduates

The Diploma in Law is an opportunity – an opportunity to study law, and an opportunity to enter the legal profession. Our graduates use this opportunity in many ways. Our graduates are found in a range of solicitor’s firms, some they have founded themselves, others as partners and employed solicitors. Some are in-house counsel in a diverse range of companies, both nationally and internationally. A number of our graduates are at the bar, including as Senior Counsel. Some of our graduates are judges, including at least one former member of the High Court of Australia.

Where will this opportunity take you?

The LEC Offers:

– The ability to work while you study

Lectures are in the evening and on weekends, and are designed to allow you to keep working while you study. There is one lecture in each subject per week, from 6pm finishing before 9pm. Lectures are held on the main campus of Sydney University in Camperdown.

– Classmates from a diverse range of backgrounds

You will be studying alongside students some of whom are working in the profession already while others are not; many mature age students who already have a successful professional path but are seeking a new direction; students who may have worked in the law overseas and are re-qualifying as they build a new life in Australia; and students of all ages. This diversity is one of the rich opportunities offered by this course.

– Specialised Sydney University Law Library services

Students have full access to the University’s Law Library, and students living outside Sydney have extended loan entitlements and the use of postal loan and photocopying services. Legal research classes, and access to an extensive electronic reserve of materials are examples of the additional library resources that are provided.

– Highly skilled lecturers

You will be taught by experts in their fields – many are teaching at Sydney or other universities. A number are leading experts at the bar or as solicitors. Our lecturers are text book authors and regularly contribute articles to professional journals. This combination of practical and academic excellence is one of the strengths of this course.

– An affordable fee structure

The course's commitment to accessibility is seen in the fee structure which makes it much more affordable than other options for studying law. The pay as you go structure means you graduate ready to work, rather than with a large debt.

– An initial intensive weekend to kickstart your studies

The initial subject (Legal Institutions) begins with an intensive weekend which allows you to build your legal literacy quickly and become comfortable working with legal sources.

– Focus on lectures

You will be learning primarily through lectures, allowing you to build a professional peer group as you study. This is an advantage over purely distance programs which can be quite isolating and where it can be difficult to build supportive networks.

– A pathway to further study

Many of our graduates proceed to a postgraduate degree, including the Master of Laws (LLM).

Suitability

The course is designed to be especially suitable for part time students, including regional residents. Many find previous study, and also work experience, to be advantageous. While a number of students work in the law or a related area, experience of working in the law is not required.

What is needed is initiative and a strong motivation towards self-directed study. The lectures in the Diploma of Law program provide you with the opportunity, but you need to be self-disciplined enough to take that opportunity. A number of our teachers are legal practitioners – a great strength because they bring their practical knowledge and real life experience into the class room – but also a challenge because they are not generally accessible to students outside of lectures.

Pressure of work, time management, and the difficulties of a new discipline are real issues which new students face. Do not be discouraged from embarking on this new challenge – but do be realistic. Critically assess the time you have available and other commitments in your life before commencing study. If you do not achieve initial academic success, recognise that you are not alone, and look for the support available to help you identify your problems and succeed.

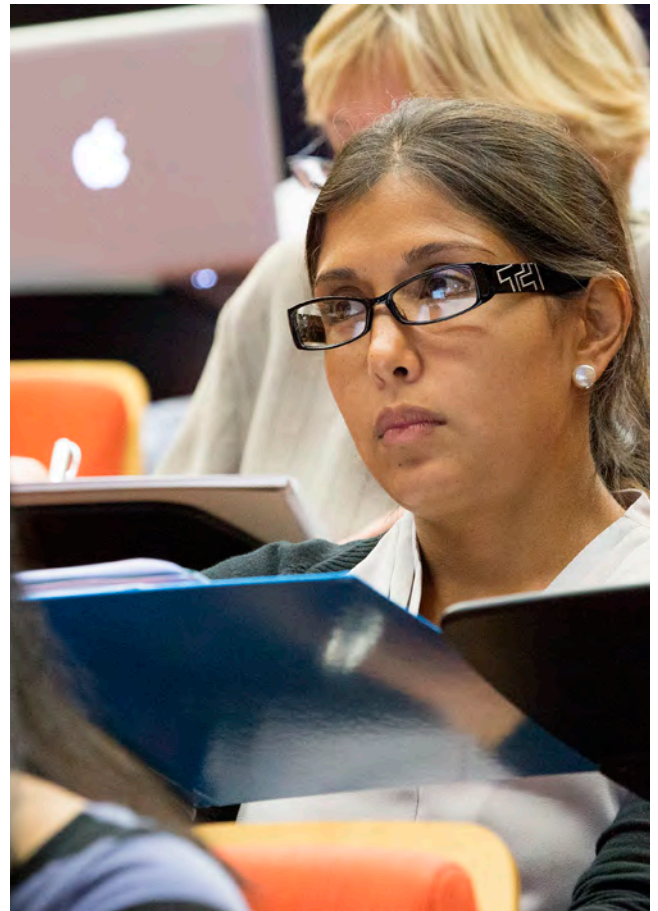


The Diploma in Law Study Program & Examinations

Assessment through the course is by examinations conducted by the LPAB and assignments. The LEC provides tuition in all the subjects that comprise the curriculum. Candidates must complete 17 compulsory and 3 elective subjects: 20 subjects in total.

All compulsory subjects are offered every semester, from November to February and from May to August. Students are supplied with a Course Information Handbook, and online access to study materials and supplementary resources. Students have full access to the University's Law Library.

Examinations are usually held in March and September, in Sydney and regional centres in New South Wales.



Students attend a lecture in each subject each week (6.00pm - 8.30pm or 9.00pm), in a 12-14 week teaching semester, on the main Sydney University campus at Camperdown, near the Sydney CBD.

Distance students can access lectures remotely. However, all students are expected to attend the the non-residential Weekend Schools offered twice each semester

In addition, at the commencement of each semester, there is an introductory weekend school for all new students. This includes workshops in legal study skills, citation and referencing, and legal research.

The Curriculum

The subjects that make up the curriculum are outlined below. Currently there are seventeen compulsory subjects and students choose three elective subjects. Our curriculum includes the Priestley 11 subjects that are taught by all accredited Law Schools and required for admission to the legal profession.

The first eleven subjects must be taken in sequence, as shown below, unless there is an exceptional reason to vary this order.

Compulsory Subjects

Legal Institutions
Criminal Law and Procedure
Torts
Contracts
Real Property
Australian Constitutional Law
Equity
Commercial Transactions
Administrative Law
Law of Associations
Evidence
Taxation and Revenue Law
Succession
Conveyancing
Practice and Procedure
Legal Ethics
Jurisprudence

Elective Subjects (3 must be taken)

Insolvency
Conflict of Laws
Family Law
Planning Law
Industrial Law (Labour Law)
Intellectual Property Law
Public International Law
Competition & Consumer Law
Advance Statutory Interpretation

The LEC Lecture Program

The Diploma in Law is a lecture-based program, and Sydney-based students should be prepared to attend lectures in the evening. Although remote access to lectures is available to distance students, and some online support is offered, this is not an online program. The main method of content delivery is the on-site lecture.

However, delivery of course content is not their only function. Lectures also assist in building a professional peer group and develop important legal (and exam) skills. Comprehension, critical thinking, note-taking, concentration and reflection are all skills which are enhanced by lecture attendance.

In some subjects, online tutorials are available to assist students to develop their legal problem solving and exam skills. A regular program of opt-in skills sessions at the Weekend Schools – such as problem solving, language skills and critical thinking – also allows students to consolidate skills during their completion of the Diploma. Students can also attend Library research seminars.

Together with attending lectures, students are required to complete assignments. Study and assignment completion require access to the LEC's learning management system, Canvas, and so you will need a regular internet connection, a computer and an email address to receive communication from us, and to be able to access the electronic resources.

Registration & Enrolment

To enrol you must first register with the LPAB as a Student-at-Law. Application forms are available online at: www.lpab.justice.nsw.gov.au under “Forms and Fees”.

Applications are approved progressively through the year, and may be submitted at any time. Please note that, in order to commence the course in May, an application must be submitted by 1 March, or to begin in November, by 1 September.

Subject enrolment takes place in April and October for the May and November semesters respectively. The full compulsory program is offered each semester. The LPAB and the LEC send an enrolment information email to all students prior to the enrolment period. As well as enrolling with the Board, students must also register with the LEC.

If you hold any of the qualifications listed on the application form you may be eligible to register as a student-at-law.

These include:

- a STAT (Multiple Choice or STAT T) result of 149 (see below);
- a university degree;
- an equivalent of the NSW Higher School Certificate and an ATAR of at least 68.90 or, a UAI of at least 66 or a TER of at least 50 (or a good interstate equivalent); for more recent high school qualifications, refer to Form1 “Application for Registration as a Student-at-Law” for further information and entry requirements, or the NSW Admission Board Rules 2015;
- a University or TAFE college Diploma, Advanced Diploma or Associate Diploma;
- Certificate III or Certificate IV at TAFE
- working as a paralegal or legal secretary for at least three years;
- working as a police officer or registered nurse.



You can qualify for entry to the course through the Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT). The STAT is a test that assesses your capabilities for tertiary study. You can undertake the STAT through ACER (Australian Council for Educational Research).

Please see <https://stat.acer.edu.au> for more information. An overall STAT result of 149 is required for entry to the course.

Fees

A major component of accessibility is the cost of obtaining the Diploma in Law, which is significantly less than comparable qualifications.

There is a once-only Student-at-Law registration application fee. Examination and tuition fees are payable at the time of enrolment in each subject. The LPAB collects all enrolment fees, including the tuition fee on behalf of the LEC.

A list of current LPAB fees is available on the LPAB website: lpab.justice.nsw.gov.au/Pages/forms-fees/fees.aspx

For the current subject tuition fee see the LEC’s website: lec.sydney.edu.au/course-overview/costs-and-fees/



Progression and Assessment

Assessment is presently by examinations and assignments. The pass mark in all subjects is 50%. Satisfactory completion of assignments is a condition of sitting for the examinations.

In the first four semesters students take no more than two subjects per semester. When eight subjects are completed, three subjects per semester are permitted. At this pace, students will complete the 20 required subjects in four years.

A student must sit for a total of at least two examinations in any two successive semesters.

Some Frequently Asked Questions

What is the status of the Diploma compared to a law degree?

For the purpose of being admitted as a lawyer, this course is the equivalent of a LLB. Many eminent practitioners, including judges, senior partners and senior counsel, have entered law by taking the LPAB examinations. The LPAB, as the admitting authority in New South Wales, regards both its own examinations and university law degrees equally as an academic qualification. There is agreement, though, that in law your learning and preparation never stop.

What assessments do we have to complete?

Students typically have one or two assignments during the semester, such as an essay, in-class test or oral presentation. These assignments make up 20% of the final grade. At the end of the semester, students sit an exam in each subject and this contributes the other 80% of a student's final mark.

How do the examinations work?

Examinations are held in person in the first week of March and September each year in the Sydney CBD and regional venues. Assessments must be satisfactorily completed for students to be eligible to sit for the final examination.

Students with exceptional circumstances who are unable to travel to an exam venue may apply to sit their examinations online on a semester by semester basis.

Do I enrol as a University student?

No. You enrol with the LPAB. You must undertake the LEC educational program in each subject you take, but your enrolment is with the LPAB, you sit for the LPAB examinations and you are a candidate for the LPAB Diploma in Law.

Why aren't lectures available online?

The LEC believes that legal education is best delivered in person. Encountering the unique range of dedicated practitioners and expert academic teachers through the course gives students a comprehensive experience of legal scholarship and culture. It also allows students to build strong professional networks while they learn.

Our extensive electronic resources are designed to provide sufficient supplementary material for distance students, when combined with attendance at the Weekend Schools.

What if I fail or don't make much progress?

Failing a subject twice leads to exclusion from the course. Failing to sit for two examinations in any two successive semesters also leads to exclusion. It is possible to apply for the exclusion rules to be relaxed.

Can I apply for exemptions on account of previous study?

Yes, if you have undertaken previous relevant academic law study in Australia or overseas, you may apply for exemption from subjects in the Diploma in Law Course. [Exemption applications](#) should be made before, or at the same time as, you register as a new student in the Course.

The result of an exemption application will depend on a range of factors including the nature of any law qualification you have, the subjects you studied, the length and age of your studies, and the jurisdiction in which you studied. If you are granted exemptions, you would still need to complete at least half of the Course (ie at least 10 of the 20 subjects which make up the Course) if you wish to be awarded the Diploma in Law qualification.



Can I increase my study load?

Yes, but special permission is needed to take more than the prescribed number of subjects in a semester, and the capacity to undertake additional subjects must be demonstrated.

Is HECS-HELP, Fee-HELP or government assistance available?

The Higher Education Loan (HECS-HELP) and Fee-HELP Programs do not apply. However, our fees are generally lower than similar law courses.

Can I go on to further study?

Yes. After completing the Diploma you may be eligible for candidature in a university Master of Laws (LLM) program, or other specialised postgraduate law courses. Diploma students have a successful presence in the University of Sydney's prestigious postgraduate programs.

What options exist for graduates, other than legal practice?

Lawyers are in demand in a wide range of occupations, including accountancy, government departments, insurance, banking, finance, media and sport.

Is there a difference between LPAB and LEC?

The LPAB is a statutory corporation established by an Act of the NSW Parliament. The LPAB is responsible for administering the Diploma in Law course and its exams.

The LEC is a committee of the Senate of the University of Sydney and is responsible for the tuition.

What if I wish to practise law in a jurisdiction in another state or territory?

Once admitted as a lawyer in Australia, a person may apply for a practising certificate in any Australian state or territory. For enquiries about applying for admission as a lawyer in NSW, contact the LPAB. For enquiries about obtaining a practising certificate in NSW, contact the Law Society of NSW (to practise as a solicitor) or the NSW Bar Association (to practise as a barrister).

What special arrangements can be made for me if I have a disability?

Please contact the LPAB to discuss your particular needs in relation to exams and the LEC to discuss any lecture requirements.

Can I get a student visa if I do the Diploma in Law?

No. This course is not registered as a course for overseas students and registration does not, therefore confer any visa entitlement.

What happens on completion of the course?

The University makes available to the LPAB its Great Hall for the Diploma in Law presentation ceremony. Once each year the LPAB's Presiding Member presents diplomas to those who have successfully completed the LPAB course of examinations, the Chair of the LEC introduces a guest speaker, and relatives and guests are invited to attend a reception afterwards.

For those entering the profession, study has not yet finished. As well as an academic qualification, completion of a course of Practical Legal Training (PLT) is also required to be eligible for admission as a lawyer. PLT can be undertaken in various modes at a number of institutions. You should enquire fairly early in your program as to the cost and suitability for your needs of the courses available.

The following institutions are accredited providers of PLT in NSW: The College of Law, The University of Newcastle, the University of New South Wales and The University of Technology Sydney.



The Legal Profession Admission Board

**For Enquiries About Enrolments, Fees,
Progression, Examinations And Graduations**

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